



United States Bankruptcy Court
Southern District of California

For Immediate Release
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PRESS RELEASE

Bankruptcy Court in San Diego Uses the Internet to Allow
Electronic Filing.

San Diego, California --March 25, 1998--United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of California today received its first Chapter 7 bankruptcy case electronically filed over the Internet. The case filed, by attorney John Colwell of the Law Offices of Reed Langlois, was completed in ten minutes - without the need to stand in line at the courthouse counter and without the usual four copies of each document.

The Electronic Case Files (ECF) system allows trained lawyers to prepare documents using Windows or Macintosh based software, convert them to Acrobat PDF file format, and file the documents from their computer desktop over the internet. Russ Reynolds, U.S.B.C. Systems Manager, points out that the "PDF files retain all of the original formatting of the documents which is particularly important for petitions and other pleadings where there is a need to easily find information." The public has access to these pleadings from the court's web site, reducing the need to come to the courthouse to look at files.

"It is our goal to create a system that is easy to use, balanced with the legal requirements of the Bankruptcy Code and Rules," said Barry Lander, Clerk of the Bankruptcy Court. "We think we have achieved this balance in our implementation of the ECF system."

The vision for the ECF system began five years ago when the court met with its customers and stakeholders to develop a long-range plan. One of the conclusions was to create a paperless or at the least, a "less paper" court. This shared vision has now become a reality through the efforts of the court's ECF Committee charged with the responsibility for implementing the ECF system. "It is the dedication of the judges and staff that has made this day possible," Lander went on, "they created the vision and now they have implemented it."

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ECF was developed as a prototype for possible national implementation with the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts. The Bankruptcy Court in San Diego is partnered in this effort with four other Bankruptcy Courts and four District Courts. The prototype in San Diego is focusing first on Chapter 7 bankruptcy cases commonly referred to as "Liquidation" and then will expand to Chapter 13 debt reorganization cases, and finally, to Chapter 11 reorganization cases.

Attorneys interested in receiving information about ECF can contact Pamela Taylor at (619)557-6582.

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